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ABSTRACT

This paper was prepared to assist in the national discussions about Canadian education at the nation, local, and administrative levels. It suggests that school systems need to be more closely matched with the social and economic needs of their communities as they make a fundamental shift into the 21st century. An argument for realism is made throughout the paper--about what schools are doing now, about what they can do in the future, and about the role of other public agencies and public institutions. The guiding principles of elementary-secondary education are identified as opportunity, choice, relevance, accountability, and collaboration. A variety of issues and challenges that face Canadian school systems are identified, which reflect interested constituencies and the social, economic, and political context. Specific challenges to the five functions of education--intellectual development, vocational preparation, socialization, the care and custody of children, and the selection and sorting of students--are discussed. Changes under way in several provinces are described. Finally, 10 strategies for administrative action are presented. Six figures are included. (Contains 72 references.) (LMI)

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Facing the Realities

An Agenda, Process and Leadership for Reinventing Schools and Communities

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1. Preface

This paper is not about what schools are doing today. It's about what schools must become for tomorrow.

Public opinion, the media, governments and educators across Canada have created a national debate about education. We welcome that discussion. It will benefit students, schools and communities.

As we enter into those discussions, we must face the realities; of what schools are doing now, of the cacophony of concerns and of the complexities of the issues.

This paper suggests that the key challenge for us all is to find a better match between the schools of today and the social and economic conditions we expect and the aspirations we hold for tomorrow.

There has been a shift in Canadian society; from a comfortable industrial nation to a technologically driven, information-based, socially disjointed world. It is normal that schools need to change to meet these new realities.

We are making important decisions about the roles and functions of schools in that new society. We should do this based on an accurate understanding of today's schools. We need to build an agenda of issues that represents all of the constituencies that schools serve. We need a planned process to manage these changes. We need administrative leadership to facilitate the process.

That is how we can face the realities successfully.

1. Acknowledgements

The Canadian Association of School Administrators gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from Stentor Resource Centre , which has enabled us to prepare and publish this document.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Milt McLaren and Gareth Morgan who served as resource people to our staff in preparing this paper.

We also benefited from the cooperation of the national organizations representing several of our partners in Canadian education, namely the Canadian Education Association, Canadian Association of Principals, Canadian Teachers' Federation, Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation and the Canadian School Boards' Association. Their comments and suggestions were most helpful.

3. Introduction: Facing the Realities

The Realities

This paper has been prepared to assist in the national discussions about education in Canada at the national, local and administrative levels. It suggests that school systems need to be matched better with the social and economic needs of their communities as they make a fundamental shift into the 21st century.

An argument for realism is made throughout the paper; about what schools are doing now; about what they can do in the future and about the role of other public agencies and private institutions.

With an Agenda

This paper lists and describes a variety of issues and challenges facing school systems across Canada. That list reflects all of the constituencies that have an interest in education as well as the social, economic and political context which creates those demands on schools.

This agenda will be used as the basis of a national seminar in Ottawa and will be referred to all relevant national forums and agencies.

A Process

This Discussion Paper will be followed by a Discussion Guide for use by school district administrators in facilitating community-based discussions about change in education. That guide will elaborate on the issues listed here, describe options and refer to resources, research and practical, successful examples.

and Leadership

The conclusion of this paper proposes 10 strategies for school district administrators to use in helping their communities and schools decide their futures. Those ten strategies will be further supported through other activities and publications by the Canadian Association of School Administrators (CASA).

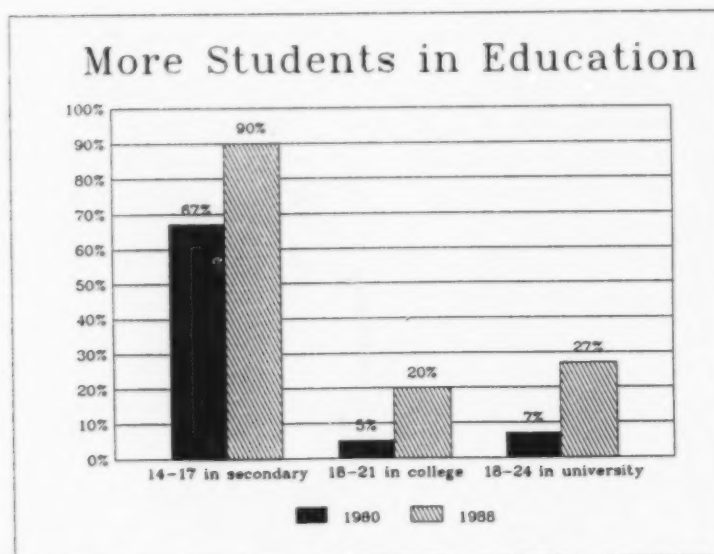
4. Understanding Today's Schools: Painful Progress and a Cacophony of Concerns

Painful Progress

The public concerns about schooling are being expressed at a time when school systems have been making slow and painful progress.

The achievements of Canadian schools have been noted by many. The Economic Council of Canada (1992, p.4), for example, has described the levels of schooling as being "among the highest in the world". Holmes (1990) reported to the Corporate Higher Education Forum, a group of university and business leaders, that Canada is the third highest among 23 industrialized nations.

Henchey (1990, p.11) reported to that same Forum that Canadian students' participation in formal education has improved dramatically in just one generation.

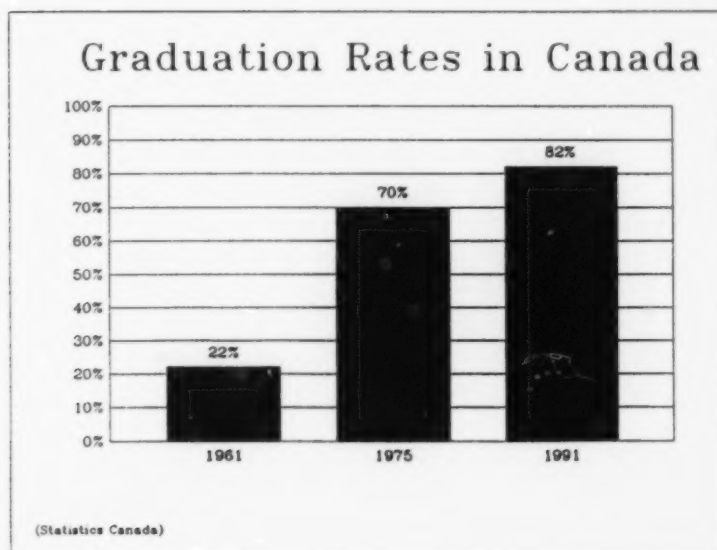


Unfortunately, such progress has not always been reported well to the public.

Lewington and Orpwood (1993) show us how quickly the national debate on education in Canada has been put off track by inaccurate data.

"One of the most blatant examples is the mythology and misunderstanding that surround the issue of drop-outs. The most quoted figure often used to raise the alarm about declining education quality, is a national rate of 30 to 33% estimated by Employment and Immigration Canada. Two points are rarely mentioned, the fact that the drop-out rate has declined steadily over the past forty years, second, the drop-out rate itself overestimates the number of children who leave school."

We were pleased to note that the Prime Minister of Canada recently used a figure of 23% to describe the national school drop-out rate. The School Leavers' Study just published by Statistics Canada (1993) can be compared with other, earlier reports from the same source (Morris, et al, 1991). They show significant improvements in graduation rates in one generation.



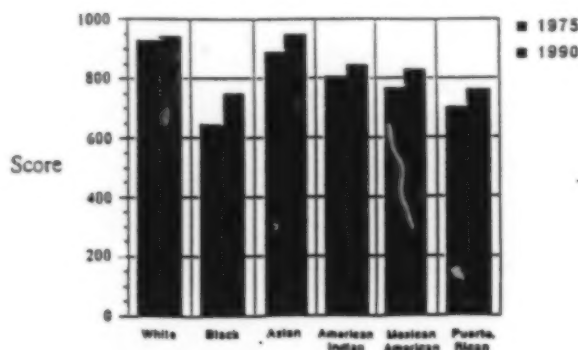
Similarly, the legitimate concern about literacy levels in the Canadian population has masked the fact that, most of the people who lack reading skills received their schooling before the reforms of the 1950s. The Southam Literacy Survey, for example noted, that one-half of the functional illiterates in Canada are 55 or older.

We also need to be careful about international comparisons of achievements in sciences and mathematics as well as in comparing the standardized achievement test results of today with those of yesterday. Lewington & Orpwood (1993) clarify our understanding of Canada's recent performance on the 1992 International Assessment of Educational Progress, which examines a representative sample of students at ages nine and thirteen on their knowledge of science and mathematics. They suggest that we acknowledge that some Canadian students are doing very well without our sinking back into complacency.

Schneider & Houston (1993) show how comparisons of today's students need to take into account the different types of students that are now in school and how they have an impact on raw average scores. They demonstrate that when we compare "apples to apples" (i.e. white, middle class students in 1975 to white, middle class students in 1990) their achievement in the Scholastic Aptitudes Test (SAT) have actually improved, despite the fact that this test, which is used in college/university admissions, has been made harder. What is also heartening, is that the scores of American minorities has also improved when they are compared to previous years.

Better Achievement of SAT Scores

SAT Subpopulation Scores



(Adapted from Carson, Mackinnon and Woodell, 1991, p. 41, From Data Supplied by the Educational Testing Service and the National Center for Educational Statistics)

A Cacophony of Concerns

However, this slow and painful progress has been occurring at a time when the needs of our society have become more diverse and more demanding.

The business community warns us of the challenge of global economic competition and the need for schools to prepare young people for an uncertain economic

future. At the same time, spiraling health care costs and urgent social issues create demands on schools to prevent those problems before we pay for the costs of treatment. Equity issues based on race, language, religion and gender are brought to the classroom as well for resolution. The time available to parents is shrinking as family structures and income earners change, thereby causing demands for other types of children's services.

School leaders face a cacophony of concerns and often competing demands for curriculum time, teacher attention, funding and programs.

The Economic Council of Canada (1992, p. vii) has captured some of the challenges facing schools in this sample paragraph;

"We are very much aware that the task facing schools and teachers is much harder than it used to be: social institutions such as the family and the church have been weakened and the student population has become more diverse. At the same time, the need for a strong education and training system has increased because the level of skills required in the world of work has escalated as a result of the transition to an information society."

In other words, the progress that schools have made since the 1960s may not be enough for the 1990s.

As Canada enters the post-industrial age, it is a time of confusion, of uncertainty and of change. It is normal that, schools, as one of the major institutions within society would need to change as well.

It is normal for a society that is in crisis to involve its schools in its transformation. Canada is a society in transition. Its economy is shaky, its social fabric is strained and its ways of life are changing rapidly. Ours is a society entering a post-industrial world driven by technology, global economic, social and environmental problems and huge demographic changes. All of these trends will change us and our schools. But, we need to sort through the confusing cacophony of demands and concerns to ensure that the changes we make to schools match the social and economic needs of our nation.

The business community has voiced its concerns about schools, as well they should, but schooling is more than preparing young people for jobs. Parents want more information and involvement, which need to be given, but schools must serve others in society as well. Equity groups advocate for changes today that will correct the wrongs that have been made but schools serve many masters.

Instead of trying to respond to each of these constituencies separately or even to try to maintain a balance among their competing philosophies, we need to engage communities in a different kind of discussion.

New Challenges

5. Reframing the Agenda, Constituencies, Complexities and Caution

We need to reframe the issues in a different kind of agenda, one which helps us first to understand the issues before us. This understanding can begin by placing schools within the context of their communities and society in general. We must also focus on how young people today differ from their predecessors. We must understand that the issues are complex and that some of them can only be resolved outside the school. Changes in school systems also take time; they require a sustained commitment over several years.

The issues that schools face include the age-old challenges of literacy, numeracy and preparation for further academic training. But schools also face a host of increased demands from a variety of constituencies because of the dramatic social, economic and political changes we are undergoing in our society. Sometimes, perhaps too often, those issues present themselves to schools as dichotomies or dilemmas. This makes it particularly difficult for schools.

The reframing of the agenda of issues must focus on finding a better match between the social and economic conditions of our future world and the programs and practices of schooling.

As we reinvent schools, we must also reinvent communities. It is the relationship between the school and the community that will give meaning to the learning in which we ask students to engage. It is that relevance that we must continue to seek as we first understand the current realities, examine our alternatives through broadly-based discussions and then undertake mutually supportive actions.

Understanding the Context

Broadening our understanding of the context in which schooling takes place is the first step in the reframing process.

The following social, economic, political and educational trends will all have an impact on schooling. Their importance and implications cannot be ignored, nor can we decide to deal only with some of these factors in isolation from the rest.

1. A Shifting Demographic Structure
2. Changing Family Structures and Lifestyles
3. Expanding Influence for Women
4. Changing Notions of Self-Fulfillment
5. Increased Alienation
6. Increased Autonomy for Individuals, and Decentralization

7. Social and Political Fragmentation
8. Changing Organizational Structures
9. More Concern for the Environment
10. Downsizing of Governments and the Public Sector
11. Nationalism and Globalism
12. Global Economic Competition
13. A Deteriorating Economy
14. Economic Restructuring
15. New Technologies
16. Increased Schooling
17. Demand for Credentials
18. Rising Expectations for Schools
19. Declining Enrolments and Resources
20. Increased Pressure on Teachers

Our next task in reframing the agenda is to seek a better understanding of our students.

Students today reflect the diversity of their society. The age range of students attending school has widened considerably. The cultures and languages of their backgrounds are varied. The students who are challenged by disability are now integrated into regular classes.

A McLean's (1993) poll revealed a wide range of lifestyles and choices being made by young people. This diversity is confirmed by other research done by Health and Welfare Canada (HWC, 1991). McLean's reported that:

- 47% of teens had done volunteer work in the past two years
- 60% of teens aged 17-19 have had sexual intercourse
- 94% of 16-17 year olds have tried alcohol and 25% have tried illegal drugs

Understanding Our Students

- twice as many boys (25%) than girls (12%) said they were "smart".

By the time young people complete their 15,000 hours of schooling, they will have watched over 18,000 hours of television. The TV that they watch will often show images of violence and sex.

One-third of the students in one of Canada's richer provinces are living in poverty (BC Ministry of Education, 1992, p.17). Relative to several European countries, Canadian children have more difficulty communicating with their parents and friends. And they are more likely to be showing symptoms of stress (King & Cole, 1992). They worry about their chances of getting a job after they graduate (McLean's, 1993). They are particularly worried about their environment (HWC, 1993).

Studies have reported that students are often bored at school and they sometimes question its relevance to their daily lives (CTF, 1990). But other studies report that, for the most part, students enjoy school (Economic Council, 1992).

In reframing the agenda of issues for schools, we should seek to respond to this greater diversity of needs and learning styles, to these sometimes difficult social and economic conditions and to student worries about the future.

It's More Than Jobs

The business community in Canada has expressed its concerns about the possible mismatch between the schools of today and the jobs of tomorrow (Economic Council, 1992; Prosperity Initiative, 1992; Corporate Higher Education Forum, 1991). This constituency is to be congratulated for expressing those concerns well and for defining their expectations about employability skills (Conference Board, 1992).

But schools do more than prepare children for jobs. So, when the business community attempts to define the mission of schools (Conference Board, 1993), they may be too narrow in their focus.

So when we discuss national reports on the economy such as those from the Economic Council of Canada and the Prosperity Initiative, we should include other reports such as Brighter Futures (HWC, 1992) and the Child Health Goals (HWC, 1993) which deal with the social development of children.

The Economic Council of Canada (1992) recognized this when they referred to Goodlad's classic overview of the functions that schools perform for society. Those functions are:

Academic

1. Mastery of basic skills and fundamental process
2. Intellectual development

Vocational

3. Career Education-Vocational Education

**Social/Civic/
Cultural**

4. Interpersonal Understanding
5. Citizenship Participation
6. Enculturation
7. Moral and ethical character

Personal

8. Emotional and physical well-being
9. Creativity and esthetic expression
10. Self-realization

The important thing about Goodlad's work is that when he asked educators, parents, students and community members to comment on whether or not schools should de-emphasize the vocational, social/civic or personal development missions of the school in order to place more emphasis on the academic/intellectual, the respondents were firm in the view that schools had to address all of the missions. He titled that chapter, *We Want It All*.

Consequently, this paper is based on a broader set of national goals for education prepared recently by the Canadian School Boards' Association (CSBA, 1992) after lengthy consultation with its members and other organizations. That goal statement is reproduced here in its entirety as a reference to the reader.

National Goals for Elementary-Secondary Education in Canada***Intellectual Development***

Students develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to acquire, analyze and apply information necessary for lifelong learning.

◆ *Enabling Knowledge and Skill*

Competency in reading, computing, oral and written communication

Knowledge and skills in the humanities, sciences, technology, mathematics and the practical and fine arts.

◆ *Life Long Learning*

Positive attitude towards learning throughout a lifetime.

Personal and Social Development

Students develop self-esteem, acceptance of responsibility for their own actions, and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others.

◆ Values

Ability to make moral and ethical decisions.

◆ Social Justice

Understanding and appreciation of fundamental human rights and of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

◆ Personal Development

*Development of a positive self-concept.
Sense of belonging to a community.
Openness to innovation, change and risk-taking.
Physical and mental well-being.
Ability to interact co-operatively with others.
Pride in one's heritage.*

◆ Citizenship

*Pride in Canada and in its multiculturalism.
Recognition of global interdependence.
Respect for law, property and the rights of others.*

◆ Career Development

Students develop an understanding of the link between ongoing education and economic and personal well-being. Students will be prepared to make the career and life decisions necessary to become productive Canadian citizens.

◆ Awareness

*Knowledge, skills, attitudes and habits expected by the work world.
Awareness of choices with respect to a profession, trade or occupation.
Skills and strategies facilitating entry into the workforce.*

◆ Change/Adaptability

Confidence in making decisions.

The CSBA Goal Statement also addresses our expectations of the school systems from the point of view of the constituencies that schools serve in addition to students. The statement does this by defining some of the desirable characteristics of the system such as equality of opportunity, choice and accountability.

The Guiding Principles of Elementary-Secondary Education Should Be:

OPPORTUNITY: *All school-age children and youth will have equitable access to quality programs that take into consideration the learner's personal background, geographic location, community, personal goals and individual characteristics.*

CHOICE: *Public schools will, within available resources, offer a range of programs that address the diverse learning needs and interests of students.*

RELEVANCE: *Elementary and secondary school programs reflect a current and meaningful view of the knowledge, skills and attitudes valued by the individual and by Canadian society.*

ACCOUNTABILITY: *Locally elected school boards are accountable to constituents for the efficient and fair allocation of resources, for the delivery of educational programs that reflect community values, and for the establishment of policy to measure and report on student performance and methods of instruction.*

COLLABORATION: *Elementary and secondary education requires a long-term commitment and responsibility shared among students and parents, educators, school board members, business, labour and legislators.*

This broad view of the different functions of schooling in society is essential if we are to match the needs of communities with the performance and practices of schools.

As society changes, so must schools. Indeed, we have seen similar transformations when we shifted to the industrial society in the early 1950s and to a more modern society when the Russian Sputnik launch sparked drastic changes to schools across North America.

Today, the calls for change are more diverse. So it is useful to categorize the new demands being placed on schools within the five basic functions or roles that formal schooling always plays for society. They are: developing the intellectual capacity of all children, preparing students for the world of work, socializing young people into the norms, values and customs, taking care and custody of children during the day and sorting or selecting young people for their future places in society.

**Changing and
Competing
Public
Expectations**

These expectations can be grouped within these five basic functions in three different ways. There are continuing, traditional challenges; there are increasing or new demands on schools and there are dichotomies or dilemmas that the schools, unfortunately, are being asked to resolve.

a) Intellectual Development

The continuing challenges are:

1. To provide students with basic literacy and numeracy skills in English (or French).
2. To prepare some students for University.

The new or increased demands are:

1. To provide basic literacy in the other of Canada's two official languages.
2. To provide basic literacy skills to the growing number of children who speak neither English or French at home.
3. To expect that all students will graduate from secondary school.
4. To provide new types of literacy including:
 - i) computer or technical literacy
 - ii) scientific literacy
 - iii) media literacy
5. To improve basic reading, writing and math skills improve for all students.
6. To shift from basic cognitive skills such as memorization or knowledge to higher order skills such as problem solving and interpersonal communications.
7. To shift from providing a finite amount of schooling per individual to instilling a love for learning.

The dichotomies or dilemmas are:

1. Adults and society today read less and watch television more.
The challenge of teaching reading is made more difficult as a result.

2. The knowledge explosion in society has created a situation where all of the academic disciplines are competing for time in the school today.
3. Debates are occurring about teaching methodologies used such as whole language, child centered approaches and results-based curricula.
4. There is confusion in the media and the general public about differences between education and training.
5. There are demands for more attention to be given to gifted children.
6. There are demands that disabled children be fully integrated in regular classrooms.
7. There is an apparent decline in basic skills as measured by the Canadian Test of Basic Skills.

b) Vocational Preparation

The continuing challenges are:

1. To instill good work habits.
2. To motivate students to seek economic advancement.

The new or increased demands are:

1. To help students make the transition from school to work.
2. To reduce drop-out rates significantly.
3. To provide more and better vocational education
4. To produce more graduates, especially girls, in science and mathematics.
5. To ensure that all students will graduate with basic computer skills and will be technologically aware.
6. To establish direct partnerships between schools and business.

The dichotomies and dilemmas are:

1. Technical and vocational occupations are not valued in our society, thereby making it difficult for schools to persuade parents and students to opt for these courses.
2. Our economy is polarizing into good jobs and bad jobs. How can we motivate students when they know that the vast majority of those jobs are bad ones?
3. Are schools expected to train an elite, in science and mathematics to compete internationally or are we expected to educate all students in basic science and math skills?
4. Does our culture favour entrepreneurship and risk-taking? How can schools teach such attitudes? Should they?
5. How can schools instill a work ethic and responsible consumerism in a society that is sending other contradictory messages to young people about their real life chances? (Consume more, earn less.)

c) Socialization

The continuing challenges are:

1. To promote honesty, good manners and respect for others.
2. To help to prevent premature drinking and sexual activity.
3. To promote good hygiene, diet and physical activity.
4. To support the values of the local community and parents.

The new or increased demands are:

1. To respond to the changes in family structures as many young people are growing up in homes that have one parent, two working parents, blended families or dysfunctional families as well as diverse cultures and lifestyles.
2. To help to instill spiritual and moral values.
3. To help to prevent violence in a society.

4. To help to prevent an ever-growing list of health and social problems including drugs, AIDS, child abuse, suicide and stress, tobacco use and teen pregnancy.
5. To help to promote active and healthy lifestyles.
6. To help to promote environmental awareness and citizenship.
7. To help to prevent racial conflict and promote cultural diversity.
8. To help to promote global understanding and world peace.

The dichotomies and dilemmas are:

1. Instilling spiritual or moral values is difficult in a society where church attendance is declining and there is a lack of consensus on those values or if schools should even try to do this.
2. Violence is difficult to prevent in a society that condones such practices in the media.

d) The Care and Custody of Children

The continuing challenges are:

1. To supervise children and youth during the school day.
2. To provide a safe environment for students during the day.
3. To provide kindergarten classes to all parents who request such services.
4. To provide academic and vocational counselling.

The new or increased demands are:

1. To provide services and care for physically and mentally handicapped students.
2. To offer, or cooperate in offering, daycare facilities for young children.
3. To organize services to supervise for children after school.

4. To deliver front line health care responsibilities for minor medical problems such as head lice.
5. To organize school meal programs to compensate for inadequate support for parents
6. To provide basic education to adults returning to school.
7. To offer personal, family and crisis counselling.

The dichotomies and dilemmas are:

1. Health and social service agencies have been withdrawing their preventive services to children and families, off-loading their responsibilities on schools.
2. There is little government leadership in the integration and coordination of services and programs for children despite ample evidence that such a comprehensive approach is effective and efficient.

e) Sorting and Selecting Students

The continuing challenges are:

1. To provide equal educational opportunity to all students so that they may achieve to the best of their potential.
2. To provide a credential to those who have completed secondary school successfully.
3. To evaluate students fairly.
4. To report on student progress to parents.

The new or increased demands are:

1. To raise the standards of achievement.
2. To have more students achieve those higher standards.
3. To evaluate higher order skills (skills, problem-solving, working in teams) as well as changes in attitudes or beliefs.
4. To evaluate basic skills using standardized tests.

5. To have all students complete secondary school successfully.

The dichotomies and dilemmas are:

1. The relevance of equality of educational opportunity is being questioned as the gap widens between rich and poor in our society.
2. There is some evidence (Economic Council, 1992) that suggests that raising standards will increase drop-out rates.
3. There are conflicting viewpoints about whether streaming of students into academic and vocational programs is desirable.
4. Some call for more emphasis on the needs of the majority of students who do not go on to university, while others call for more programs for the gifted.
5. The call for more standardized tests has created a debate on only one aspect of evaluation. We need evaluation systems that help us measure the requisition of skills and beliefs. (These are more expensive than simple pencil and paper tests.) We need to constantly require demonstration, analyze performance, correct and remediate, practise, synthesize and progress to new levels. Educators' views about evaluations do not reflect those of the general public.
6. The call for Mastery Learning, where by every student is expected to acquire basic knowledge and skills over a variable amount of time, ignores the reality that some students, particularly those with profound disabilities, may never achieve those levels.

Other Issues Facing the School System

There are other issues that challenge the school system that relate to governance, structures and equity within the system.

1. The role of the parent, both individually and collectively, is being re-assessed and redefined in legislation.
2. The amount of parental choice in choosing private schooling with the use of the public funding provided by governments is being debated. (Vouchers)

The Issues are Complex

3. The representation and role of elected school boards is being questioned by some.
4. Many are calling for a transfer of administrative authority to the school level.
5. Ministries of Education are withdrawing from the role of providing support, materials, training and leadership to one of monitoring and funding only.
6. The Federal government has stimulated needs and drawn public attention to education but has no policy or structure to act upon those ideas.

Schneider & Houston (1993) in writing for the American Association of Educational Service Agencies, quote from testimony given to the US House of Representatives Sub Committee on Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education:

"For every complex question, there is a simple answer - and its wrong."

This testimony was given by a high tech laboratory that had been commissioned by President Bush to review the school system. However, their report to the U.S. administration was ignored because they concluded that American schools were doing a decent job and that any substantive change was likely to be complicated in its design and implementation.

And Some May Not Be Solved by the Schools Alone

Some issues are not resolvable through changes to school systems.

For example, schools cannot make Canada more competitive internationally. They are only one of several factors described by corporate leaders as having a negative impact. (Morgan, 1990, p.139)

Figure 6. Weaknesses in Canada's Competitive Position:
A Synopsis of Executive Opinions.



Further, we need to be certain that the apparent demand for highly technical skills is actually real. Berliner (1993) argues that there is no shortage of technical skills in the US because most of the jobs being created are low-skilled service jobs. Secondly, we need to determine whether it will be schools or colleges or employers that should provide such specialized training. It is problematic for schools to do this because their equipment is usually obsolete. It may also not be desirable that schools try to offer such specialized training when it can be done more effectively elsewhere.

As we reframe our agenda for changing school systems, we need to be realistic about how long it takes for school systems to change.

Education employs one out of every five workers in Canada. It represents a significant proportion of Canadian society working in 12 large provincial/territorial systems. They are big systems, serving a lot of students and employing a lot of people. They have a momentum or inertia similar to any other large system.

That inertia actually helps to protect us from any particular government or ideology taking over too quickly.

School systems are open, loosely-coupled and bureaucratic. In other words, it is easy to introduce small changes (innovations) quickly into individual schools but it will take a long time for that change to be introduced in all schools.

It also means that no government, no school board, or no administrator can simply order that a change be made. Teachers, the parents and the students all need to be convinced of the value of the change.

Finally, it also means that proposed changes are negotiated and evaluated at each step of the system; at the ministry level, at the school board level and at the school level.

Shannon & McCall (1993) have described the complexity of this task to the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies. They note that there are 22 separate layers between the federal government and schools and 23 formal processes through which any educational innovation must pass before it is adopted within the system.

Some may wish to bypass these systems by advocating school-based, management or even school vouchers. But we can't avoid the fact that there are about 19,000 schools which need to be reached if we are to have an impact on all of the students in Canada. We need a systematic long-term commitment to change.

Fullan (1991) and many others have described how necessary it is to have a detailed plan for introducing educational changes. They note the failure of most attempts because they don't recognize that change is more than just rewriting a curriculum or requiring a test. It is a complex process involving new materials,

**Real Change
Takes
Commitment
Over Time**

Change Must Start in the Community

new structures and modifications to the organizational culture. It also requires more commitment to teacher development.

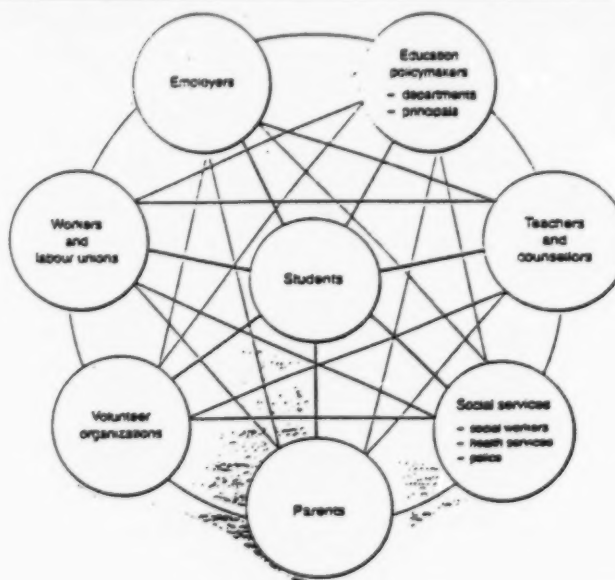
It takes a whole village to educate a child. The problems and solutions that we face go beyond the schools into the community. We need the pervasive cooperation of families, health and social service agencies, business and labour, governments and media.

The author of a recent report to the Carnegie Foundation (Carnegie, 1993, p.19) also called for us to reinvent community as the first step in reforming schools.

"I am more convinced than ever of the importance of reinventing the community, both within our schools and within our neighbourhoods. This sense of place, of belonging is a critical building block for the healthy development of children."

The Economic Council (1992, p.49) prepared a diagram of the partners within a community that need to be involved.

Coherence: participants and linkages



The diagram prepared by the Economic Council is not yet complete. School boards, representing the local community's values and priorities, are essential to the process. Equity and advocacy organizations must be involved from the outset. Older people should be re-engaged in the education and nurturing of the young in our society.

Reinventing communities means giving the members of that community more meaningful control of what happens to them as a collective entity. The reform of their schools, done for their purposes and accomplished in their way would help to restore that sense of belonging that has escaped so many of our lives.

6. A Process for Change: Reinventing Schools and Communities

It's Already Started

Change, in the form of significant reviews of goals, structures, curricula and pedagogy, is already underway or has been recently completed in several provinces.

- In British Columbia, a Royal Commission reported in 1988 and changes have been underway on a massive scale ever since. Legacy for Learners: Report of the Royal Commission in Education, (1988).
- In Alberta, the Ministry has recently published its document, A Vision for the Nineties: A Plan of Action, (1991).
- In New Brunswick, the major report was entitled, Schools For a New Century: Report of the Commission on Excellence in Education (1992)
- In Newfoundland and Labrador the Royal Commission report was entitled, Our Children Our Future (1992).
- In Prince Edward Island, a Task Force Report described its major changes as Education: A Shared Responsibility (1992).
- In Manitoba, the report, Creating a Framework for the Future Education: Legislation for the 1990s, (1993) is the focal point.

Events are also moving swiftly at the national level.

- The Canadian School Boards' Association has developed a set of proposed national goals.
- The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada has established a system to report on basic indicators of academic success.
- The Canadian Education Association is doing a major project investigating school effectiveness.
- The Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher Federation is actively promoting scientific literacy.
- The Canadian Teachers' Federation is working with its membership and other stakeholders to develop a national consensus on the role of schools, their responsibilities and how they would be accountable.
- The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and Statistics Canada have established a joint council on educational statistics so that accurate data can be gathered and compared.

Lewington and Orpwood (1993), in one of the most recent analyses of Canadian education, call for action based on three principles.

- **Clarity:** So that those inside and outside the school system can work from an agreed set of goals.
- **Integrity:** So that the goals are worthwhile, achievable and measurable.
- **Accountability:** So that students, teachers and schools hold themselves accountable for results, with the support of parents and the community.

We accept the application of these principles, provided they apply to all of the partners in the learning process. After all, shared or mutual accountability is the most effective form of partnership.

We would however, add a fourth principle; **responsibility**.

Schools are easy to pin down and measure. They are easy to locate and they have a public responsibility.

However, others may escape public inspection.

An example of this is the hiring and employment practices of local businesses. Decima (1987) reported that 29% of Ontario drop-outs left school for job-related reasons. King et al (1988) confirmed that finding, reporting that 33% of the drop-outs cited a job opportunity as a reason for leaving school. However, they also noted that such economic reasons often masked other personal and academic factors. King et al also noted the impact of employers asking students to work more than 15 hours per week while they were in school, describing this practice as a potential risk.

But we also need to ensure that the responsibility assigned matches the capacity of the partner in the learning process. For example, we have always hesitated to criticize parents because some of them are simply struggling to survive tough economic times.

The Education Testing Service (ETS, 1993), the agency which does the SAT test in the US, helps us to examine the role of parents and the question of low socio-economic status (SES). Their analysis helps us go beyond the somewhat traditional positions that have been taken about poverty and achievement.

They isolate two negative, family-related factors (absence from school and excessive TV) and three positive factors (reading more than 10 pages, 3 types of reading material at home, parent accessibility to assist with homework) and show that these factors predict academic success at a rate of 91%. All of these factors are within the grasp of all parents.

Shared Accountability for Results

**Seeking
Consensus**

We cannot call for standardized testing of employers and parents. But we can ask for a definition of their responsibilities in the education process, ensure that those responsibilities are clear and have integrity and finally, we can ask that they be held accountable for those responsibilities.

This type of shared accountability is best defined through dialogue among the partners. That accountability and the responsibilities are also best described within the context of a shared vision or common goals.

The process of establishing shared accountability begins with a shared vision. Schooling is one of the means by which a community achieves its social and economic goals.

The provincial/territorial reports cited at the beginning of this section of this paper were all based on attempts to reconnect schooling to the social and economic needs of the future.

Similarly, the Prosperity Initiative recognized the need for a national dialogue on education goals in calling for a Canadian Learning Forum.

This same basic need for consensus on desired outcomes for shared responsibility and accountability and for mutually supportive action is present in local communities. We believe, therefore, it is essential that local school boards continue and expand their efforts to initiate multi-party discussions or forums in their communities.

These discussions and forums need to involve employers, unions, community groups, municipalities, health/social service agencies, police, parents, students, teachers and school administrators.

It is through such discussions that we will be able to reinvent schools and communities together.

7. Administrative Leadership: 10 Strategies for Action

School district administrators must accept the responsibility for initiating and managing change within the school systems. This paper presents and recommends a number of steps that senior managers of school systems can undertake in cooperation with others.

These 10 actions all lie within the mandate and capacity of the senior managers of school districts. Many of these strategies are being used every day in school systems across Canada.

But, we, as the senior professionals in the systems, need to continue to strive to do more and do it better.

We recommend these 10 strategies to school administrators.

1. Focus on the multiple clients of the system.
2. Help to develop a vision for your community.
3. Clarify the responsibilities of schools and other agencies in achieving that vision.
4. Use strategic planning to identify opportunities and to build on strengths within the community and school district.
5. Plan, implement and evaluate policies, programs and services accordingly.
6. Invest more in staff development.
7. Make greater use of information technologies.
8. Commit to improving quality and regular evaluation.
9. Help to reinvent schools and communities.
10. Do more research and development.

Just as the problems are complex, so are the solutions. Each of the 10 strategies suggested in this paper require careful and lengthy deliberation prior to their use.

1. Focus on Multiple Clients

This strategy is being used in business. Essentially, the goal is to better understand the "customer" and to move the decision making process closer to the customer so that responsiveness is enhanced. The only trouble is, that, in education, we aren't certain who the customer is.

Is it the students or are they the "products"? Is it the individual parent or is it the mandated parent advisory committee that recommends certain programs? Is it

the school board, the agency that actually decides who is hired and where the budget will be spent? What about the taxpayers? Do they have a legitimate say in what schools should be doing? How about governments, who provide the funding and determine what should be taught in the curriculum?

Murgatroyd & Morgan (1993, pp. 97-120) spend a whole chapter of their book Total Quality Management and Schools trying to explain how this customer-driven approach can be applied. There are others who would argue with their attempts. So it behooves us to be careful about simply saying that schools should move closer to the client or customer.

Nevertheless, school systems must become more responsive and more accountable. We need to document and explain what we are doing in comprehensive and practical terms. We must be accountable for measurable results, while also recognizing that there are some things that cannot be measured for individual students.

2. Help to Develop a Vision for Your Community

Morgan (1990) suggests that a vision linking schooling and the economy is absolutely essential if Canada is to become more competitive. Otherwise there will be a continued polarization of views on how we should respond to the decline in our competitiveness.

Murgatroyd & Morgan (1993, pp. 83-84) show the practical value of having a vision. It encourages, enables, empowers and develops the staff of the organization, it acts as a cornerstone for decision-making and it provides common points for focusing our energies.

Berliner (1993) has pointed out that every nation has a vision of childhood, of development, schooling, equality and success. Stevenson & Stigler (1992, p.17) have explained how these visions affect the capacity of schools in Japan, China and the United States.

So, it is essential that school administrators help to build a vision within their own communities of what constitutes acceptable social and economic progress.

3. Clarify the Responsibilities of Schools and Other Agencies

Within that vision of social and economic progress, we can then define, in practical and achievable terms, the responsibilities of the school.

We cannot allow ourselves the luxury of writing down platitudes or impossible dreams.

We cannot write a mission statement for schools without, at the same time, writing a mission statement for social service, health and employment agencies that serve youth and families. We need to establish reliable partnerships and

agreements with employers, unions and voluntary organizations. Students and parents can be asked to make formal commitments as well.

We believe that this process will take some time. So we recommend the use of forums which bring together all of the partners.

We welcome the idea of a Canadian Learning Forum and express the hope that it will be representative of the many stakeholders in the learning process. We recommend consideration of creating such mechanisms at the provincial/territorial and community levels.

4. Use Strategic Planning

Too often school systems appear to operate independently of their communities and always seem to be reacting to crises.

Consequently, we recommend greater use of explicit strategic planning processes by school systems that will enable schools to anticipate external opportunities and to build on the internal strengths of their system and their communities.

5. Plan, Implement and Evaluate Policies, Programs and Evaluation

These traditional managerial functions can be improved by a review of several recent publications.

The American Association of School Administrators (Lewis, 1993) has described extensively the evolving roles and effective styles of leadership. Lewis defines four essential skills for educational administration in the 1990s:

- agreement building
- networking
- exercising non-jurisdictional power
- institution building

The text also describes recent theories of management as they apply to education, including the work of Bolman & Deal (Reframing, Multiple Lens), Peter Senge, (Learning Organizations), Sergiovanni (Moral Leadership), Yanofsky (Situational Leadership) and Deming (Total Quality Management).

In Canada, Gareth Morgan (1990) argues that school administrators must broaden the competencies of their staffs as well as themselves and reframe their contexts in order to offer effective educational leadership.

In respect to policy development, we recommend greater attention be paid to explicit, comprehensive policies, to involve the community and staff in the

process and to improve public accountability. The publication, School Board Policy-Making: Process, Politics and Pitfalls (CASA, 1992) is recommended.

With regard to evaluation, we recommend the publication produced recently by several organizations, entitled, The Code of Fair Testing Practices.

6. Invest in Staff Development

The State of Kentucky has been described in a report of the National Governors' Association (David, 1993) as a model of school reform. As part of that reform, the state has described specific dollar increases in the allocations to professional development. In Canada, the Prosperity Initiative (1992, p.46) has emphasized the training and development of managers.

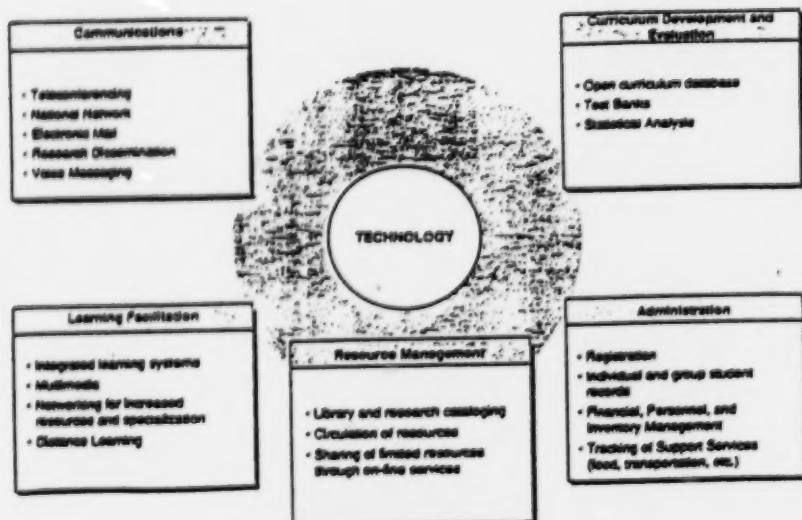
Canada is notoriously poor at human resources development in business, academia, and government. We lag well behind the other GATT countries in on the job training hours/year and in R & D expenditures. Our attitude to professional development is simply part of a larger problem. We expect people to learn and develop new skills with little or no training and support, and to do so as an overtime, own time, or part time venture. This just won't work any longer.

We also suggest that each jurisdiction should have an explicit development plan for all of its employees.

7. Greater Use of Information Technologies

Telecommunications and technologies can enhance learning, improve evaluation, assist in reducing administrative costs and enhance managerial effectiveness.

Recently, Stentor Canada consulted with school district administrators in Vancouver and Halifax and identified these potential uses of information technologies (IT)



8. Commit to Improving Quality

While even the founder of Total Quality Management, W. Edwards Deming, is now leery of the label of TQM, his quality movement can be a source of continuous improvement for school systems.

These principles, which are based on TQM, can be applied to the school system; albeit with caution and a certain degree of skepticism:

- focus on the customer
- teamwork
- continuous improvement of the system
- fact-based evaluation of the system

We need to be careful so that the value of a commitment to improving quality is not reduced by inappropriate applications of a system that was created on a factory floor. Nevertheless, we cannot avoid our responsibility to improve.

9. Reinvent Schools and Communities

Restructuring or even re-engineering the school system needs to be carefully considered. Recently, governments have begun the process by introducing mandated parent advisory councils or school councils, amalgamating school districts and promoting school-based management.

The re-organization being considered also includes other agencies. Several provinces are planning to use the school as a base or linking mechanism for delivering health and social services to children.

We suggest that we begin with the teaching and learning process. Henchey (1990) suggests that schools must recognize that they no longer hold the monopoly on learning. Lewington & Orpwood (1993) suggest emphasis on using community-based resources. The variety of teaching strategies has been well described in Saskatchewan (1991). Technology in support of learning is a growing reality for most schools.

The school/neighbourhood is the next level to be considered. School effectiveness and school improvement research are obvious sources. School-based management, magnet schools and other forms of school choice need to be part of this discussion. Parental involvement, either in the form of mandated representation or more communication with individual parents, is also on this list.

Re-organization of the school district and agency programs should follow. The number of administrative positions within the school district may be part of this change. However, we should note that American studies (Berliner, 1993, p.637) have shown that educational administrators supervise more employees (14.5) than most industries, including transportation (9.3), food products (8.4), utilities (6.6), construction (6.3) and communications (4.7).

The provincial/territorial Ministries of Education, Health, Social Services, Employment and Law Enforcement are the next structure on the list for review.

Finally, the role of the Federal government in Canada needs to be reviewed. It spends 13 billion annually in education with almost no public scrutiny. It has a splintered approach to policy-making on education. It is withdrawing support for research and development related to education.

10. More Research and Development

Lewington & Orpwood (1993, p.197) have called for more research and development in education. The Prosperity Initiative (1992, p.49) recommended more research and also recommended that funding agencies such as the Social Sciences and Humanities Council coordinate their research agendas as they pertain to education.

8. **CASA's Commitment**

To A National Dialogue

The Canadian Association of School Administrators also need to commit itself to the process of reinventing schools and communities.

We will do so now.

There are a number of levels at which the CASA commitment to improving schools can be demonstrated. At the national level, our Association has already taken a step in this direction by inviting its partners involved directly in the school system to comment on this paper and to cooperate in other activities.

We are pleased also to support the initiatives that those organizations have already undertaken and we will try to increase our efforts wherever possible and appropriate.

We are also organizing a seminar next November with senior federal officials and the education community with a view to examining the agenda of issues described in this paper and to improving the connections between federal initiatives and school systems.

Since the federal government is large and the issues are many, there is often a lack of coherence or communication at this level. The legitimate role of the federal government has not always been clearly described or understood, despite the fact that it spends 13 billion dollars annually on education.

Our third step at the national level will be to pass along this agenda of issues to the Canadian Learning Forum, an arms length agency which is being explored and discussed with funding provided by the federal government.

We are hopeful that this Forum can connect the national discussion in education to the organizations and structures that make up the education systems across Canada. If this Forum can be structured so that it represents the wide array of constituencies that have a direct or indirect stake in education, then it could contribute significantly to the national discussion of education issues.

To Supportive Community- Based Discussion

However, this national dialogue is only one part of the process needed to reinvent schools and communities. The more significant part of the process will need to occur or continue to occur in local communities.

Many school districts regularly engage their communities in a dialogue about education in a variety of ways. We hope to support these discussions and to encourage the initiation of new ones by publishing a Discussion Guide based on this paper.

That Discussion Guide will try to assist communities and school systems to match education policies, programs and services more effectively with locally defined social and economic priorities. It will describe, in more detail, the issues listed in the agenda contained in this paper. It will outline basic policy and

program options available as they are described by research and experts. It will refer people to resources, materials and exemplary models.

These community-based discussions will occur within the context of their respective provincial/territorial jurisdictions. Obviously, they will be influenced by the prevailing social and economic conditions in each region and will be directed by the policies, curricula and other decisions made by provincial/territorial governments.

We hope that the Discussion Guide will be a tool, a resource and a springboard for those all important community-based deliberations.

This paper has identified 10 strategies that senior school district administrators can use to facilitate those community-based discussions and to reinvent their schools and communities.

CASA will be trying to improve the use of these strategies through its activities, publications and programs.

To illustrate how we will do this, we can turn to the strategy of improving the use of information technologies and telecommunications.

CASA is currently developing and expanding its use of technology through its electronic publishing service. We are working in partnership with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management to offer executive summaries of the latest research, developments and publications in education.

We are in the process of establishing a national network, or Special Interest Group, of school district administrators and others to promote the effective use of information technologies by school districts.

As part of that process, we are discussing a publication prepared in partnership with Stentor Canada so that knowledge about the uses of such technology can be disseminated in a format most useful to school district administrators.

Also, as part of the process, we hope to garner the support of CANARIE, the agency being funded by the federal government to create an electronic information highway across Canada. School districts are not currently represented on this agency and we hope to improve our record in this regard.

CASA has always tried to improve administrative practices through its professional development program. Our summer Leadership Academies are attracting more participants each year, through the programs developed by our volunteers and the support we receive from Servicemaster of Canada.

But we will be adding to that effort through a joint project on Total Quality Management with the Conference Board of Canada. A network of large urban

To Improving Administrative Leadership

school districts is already being formed. We hope to create another group when we hold a workshop on this topic in October.

These are the types of steps that CASA will take as it acts upon its commitment to reinvent schools and communities.

They are not big steps but they are realistic and achievable. They are within the mandate or responsibilities that have been assigned to CASA by its membership. We will hold ourselves accountable for their success.

We think that promoting administrative leadership through the use of the ten strategies outlined in this paper is our part in helping schools and communities.

They are our response to the challenge of facing the realities of today so that we can help our students meet the challenges of tomorrow.

This paper has tried to reframe the agenda of issues facing schools so that we can have productive discussions that will lead to real change. We started that reframing process by describing the current achievements of schools, by listing the social and economic factors that will have an impact on schooling and by suggesting a broad policy and analytical framework.

The Discussion Guide which follows suggests a process for local communities and school districts to use in discussing that agenda of issues.

We have concluding by stating the commitments that the national organization representing school administrators (CASA) is making.

If we are to be successful in reinventing schools and communities then all of the constituencies that have an interest in schooling need to be involved. That is the way that we will ensure that schooling will be better matched with the social and economic conditions and aspirations of communities.

We will also need to be realistic in our assessments of what is possible and of which institution or agency has the responsibility to act upon the goals that we define together.

That's when the cacophony of various constituencies and concerns will turn into a consensus bringing schools closer to their communities. And when schools will become more effective, accountable and meaningful to students.

That's when we will have successfully faced the realities.

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